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## For Immediate Release

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### **Reedsport Apprentice Linemen Win Big in Regional Competition Memorial Event Honors Washington Lineman Killed On the Job**

Central Lincoln PUD Apprentice Linemen Brent Mann and Tyler Foster were honored for their top-notch technical skills at the 2010 Andrew York Memorial Lineman Rodeo in Wenatchee, Washington, beating 29 apprentice linemen from Washington, Oregon, Missouri, and Canada. Mann and Foster live in Reedsport.

“We are very, very proud of Brent and Tyler winning this competition,” said Central Lincoln’s general manager Paul Davies. “This would not have happened without a great deal of work, study, and attention to detail, or without the support of and training from our crews. It’s important to our customers that we have linemen who work safely, quickly, and accurately, and these awards strongly reflect those qualities.”

Mann took the competition as the First Place All-Round Apprentice, having finished at or near the top in five events, including a written test; Mystery Events doing repairs—both underground wire and spool clevis; in the “Hurt Man” Rescue, rescuing a 200-pound mannequin from the top of a utility pole; and in Speed Climbing. Speed climbing is done by linemen with specialized hooks attached to their legs, and climbing utility poles can be very jolting physically, so linemen are taught to climb up and down poles smoothly and with considerable agility. To ensure correct technique is used in climbing competitions, and that competitors are breathing correctly and not jarring the pole, they are required to climb up and down with a raw egg in their mouths. A competitor loses points if the egg in his mouth is broken, as this means he was not using correct technique.

As the top apprentice in this year’s competition, Mann will have the honor of being in the top position in the opening flag-raising ceremony at the 2011 Andrew York Linemen Rodeo on a utility pole with eight competitors on it. Also, in addition to winning the top finisher’s trophy, Mann received an ornately tooled silver belt buckle.

Reedsport’s Tyler Foster won the “Mystery Event—Secondary Spool Clevis Change-Out” which was sprung on competitors as the competition began. Linemen need to be highly skilled in a wide variety of disciplines, and thus each mystery event tests a different line skill. A “secondary spool clevis change-out” is the safe, skillful and rapid replacement of a porcelain or ceramic spool clevis after climbing a 35 foot pole and using a rope sling to hold disconnected wire. The clevis connects an electric utility’s service to customers’ homes.

Foster is a second-generation lineman—his father Randy is a journeyman lineman with another consumer-owned electric utility serving Oregon’s south coast

Mann and Foster are “sixth-step” apprentice linemen, meaning they have moved from ground work to safely working with progressively greater voltages in progressively more complex overhead and underground installations. There are seven steps of apprenticeship that apprentice linemen must reach, plus they must complete 500 hours of class work and tests, in order to become linemen.

The purpose of linemen rodeos is to offer linemen opportunities to competitively sharpen their skills and to earn hours of work-related training in an industry in which workers must be highly-skilled and constantly vigilant, as electric power ranks as one of the top ten most dangerous career fields in the United States.

The Wenatchee lineman competition is held in honor of Andrew York, a lineman who died on the job after being hit by a drunk driver in 2000. This year, 16 teams and 30 apprentices competed in safety, work practice, and skill competitions.

Mann is a nine year veteran with Central Lincoln, and lives with his wife Kari, and children Ashton and Riley in Reedsport. Tyler Foster has worked for Central Lincoln for seven years and also resides in Reedsport with his wife Amber, and children Gabe and Jayde.

The Central Lincoln People's Utility District is Oregon's fourth-largest electric utility, serving some 700 square miles and more than 80,000 people in portions of Douglas, Coos, Lane, and Lincoln counties. Central Lincoln is not-for-profit, and is publicly-owned; it was created in 1940 by voters to serve the public.

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